

CHANDAMAMA

FEBRUARY 1994



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CHANDAMAMA

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and More!**

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Vol. 24 MARCH 1994 No. 9

THE FLOWER WITH A CURSE : Thrown overboard by Veerendra Kumar, Thangai tries to remain afloat and suddenly touches something wooden. It is his boat. He gets into it. There is no trace of the bunches of flowers, but he finds the paddles. Without 'Shatabdika', there is no point in meeting the monster. He rows back to Nagapura and alerts the king and the commander. Together with Chieftain Kabul, they rush to the cliffs and are aghast at the sight that awaits them. The monster has arisen from the sea and is approaching the two boats carrying the soldiers. The commander orders his soldiers to throw lighted torches at the monster, who is set ablaze. In his anger, he topples the two boats. Where is Veerendra Kumar? The serial rushes to an exciting end.

VEER HANUMAN : After enjoying the hospitality of Hanuman's mother, Rama, Sita, and all those who have accompanied them return to Ayodhya. Yayati's wife, Yasodhara, blesses Sita to become a mother soon. Hanuman is in deep meditation in Gandhamadana. A messenger from Rama requests him to return to Ayodhya. The messenger wears a sad look. "What has happened?" asks Hanuman. "What more is there to happen?" is the reply.

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Universal Brotherhood

In 1924, four years after he founded the Gujarat Vidyapeeth, Gandhiji had occasion to address the students there. He exhorted them to treat Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis, and Jews as their brothers. They must not only have faith in the concept of universal brotherhood, but practise it, too. He told them in strong words that, if they did not ascribe to that faith, if they did not want to practise it, they would have no place in the institution.

Gandhiji used to echo the same sentiments through his columns in *Young India* which he edited. In clear words he said, the youth had to think not in terms of a province, or a town, or a class, or a caste, but that of a continent. In his speeches, too he would often draw the attention of his countrymen to the wider perspective of humanism and equality.

This is where one's education plays a dominant role. Adi Sankara had said: *Education is that which helps man gain harmony with everyone, everything, everywhere.* Unfortunately, modern day education is purely external, not internal or eternal.

The lofty way of education should enable the student uplift his own self and journey towards perfection in thought, speech, manner, and deed which, in turn, will help secure true knowledge. The purpose of education is to create that perfection in man.



A WINDOW ON THE WORLD

Anointing a statue

Like the Kumbh Mela, the *Mahamastakabhishek Mahotsav* of Lord Bahubali also takes place once in 12 years. Revered by the followers of the Jain religion, the spectacular head anointing of the world's tallest monolithic (cut out of a single rock) statue of Gomateswara in Sravanabelagola, a pilgrim centre in Hassan district of Karnataka, took place on December 19. It was the 85th such ceremony after the installation and consecration of the statue in A.D. 981. Being the last one in this century, the 1993 ceremony attracted world attention and was planned on a very grand scale. The holy date is chosen, taking into consideration the conjunction, or coming together, of certain heavenly bodies.

Jainism, as everybody knows, was founded by Vardhamana Mahavira, who was the last of the 24 Tirthankaras or spiritual leaders whom the Jains worship. The first Tirthankara was Adinath Rishabhdev. He was a king.



When he decided to renounce the material world, he gave Ayodhya to his eldest son, Bharata, and Podanpura to his second son, Bahubali, who refused to accept the overlordship of Bharata. The brothers faced each other for a fight. Their ministers prevailed upon them not to involve their armies as that might result in the death of several innocent persons. They agreed. What took place was the first ever non-violent war in the world, because no weapons were used. Bharata was defeated. Bahubali caught him by both hands and raised them to hurl him to the ground. Suddenly, his anger left him. The divinity in him manifested and he renounced his kingdom.

Bharata was repentant and pleaded with his brother not to renounce the world. But Bahubali was adamant. He stood in penance, without eating or drinking, for so long that creepers wound



his legs and crept upto his arms. Bharata went to him again and prayed: "O Shramana (asectic)! Nothing is mine or thine!" But Bahubali was not dissuaded. Soon afterwards, he attained salvation. Bharata made a golden statue of his brother and installed it in Podanpura.

Years later, in the 10th century A.D., a lady named Kallal Devi wished to have a *darshan* of this statue. Her affectionate son, Chamund Rai, who was the General-in-chief and Prime Minister of King Rachmall II, of the Ganga dynasty, agreed to take her to Podanpura. On their way, they happened to halt at the place, which later came to be called Sravanabelagola, nestled between two hillocks, Chandragiri and Indragiri. The mother and son, had a strange experience. Both of them had the same dream, in which Kushmandini Devi appeared before them and asked them to stand on Chandragiri and shoot an arrow towards Indragiri in the south. Next morning, Chamund Rai sent his golden arrow to the top of the bigger hill opposite, when he saw the figure of Bahubali etched against the hill.

Chamund Rai immediately set about chiselling the statue out of the granite rock. The work was entrusted to a team of sculptors. The statue slowly emerged out of a single rising boulder of granite from top downwards to the pinnacle of Indragiri. Chamund Rai performed the first Mahamastakabhishek on March 13, 981. As Chamund Rai used to be called Gomat (handsome) in his childhood, the statue was named Gomateshwar (Ishwar or god of Gomat).

The 18 metre (57 feet) high statue faces north. People are at once captivated by the calm and "soft, benevolent smile" on the face. They feel that the image showers the message of peace and non-violence. Near the foot of the statue is an expanse of water. This lustrous lake is called Belagola, in Kannada language.

The ceremony

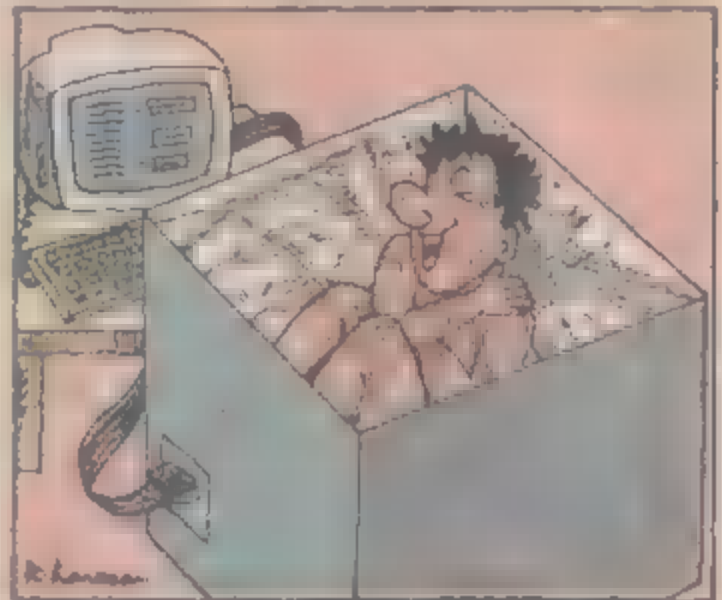
Though the rituals start a fortnight earlier, the actual abhishek (anointing) lasts some six hours. The statue is bathed with hundreds of litres of sugarcane juice, followed by milk, a mixture of herbs, and then a white liquid made of flour. By then, devotees would take their place on the specially constructed platform on the scaffolding, holding 1,008 Kalashams containing holy water from the lake below and the several rivers of India. After the water from these vessels is poured over the head, sandal paste of three different varieties is poured. This is followed by a shower of flower petals of myriad colours. The statue is once again washed with water, and archana is performed with eight different articles, including fruits and flowers. It is a breathtaking sight when the statue changes colours every other minute as the mastakabhishek takes place—in grandeur unsurpassed by any other religious spectacle in the world.

News Flash

Computer controlled bath

Do you hate taking ■ bath—thinking of the various exercises involved? Then, you can watch out for an advertisement in your newspaper, for Basu-Robo. Yes, it is ■ robot, fabricated in Japan, which will give you a bath—with computer perfection! You need only sit inside ■ 1.6 metre tall cubicle and you can then close your eyes while you are given ■ spray of hot water, a jet of liquid

soap, another spray of hot water to rinse the suds off, and then you enjoy a cool drying breeze. Who'll scrub the back? did we hear you ask? No, there are no artificial hands to do that, but the robot's spray and jet will give you a satisfying feeling. However, if you wish to shampoo your hair, you will have to do that yourself before you get into the cubicle. You can rest assured that no soap water will get into your eyes. Five companies in Japan put their heads together to invent this bath-robot, which will cost—now, don't blink—something like Rs. 14 lakhs.



A flat in English Channel

A 19th century fort is soon to become luxurious apartments. And where?



Right in the English Channel. Originally, the fort had ■ garrison to hold 400 soldiers and as many as 50 cannons. The fort was built to keep the French away from contemplating an invasion of England! Recently, it was sold for 6,250,000 U.S. dollars to be converted into housing accommodation. It will have a lighthouse and a helicopter pad.



OUR OLDEST FRIENDS AND HELPERS

You have seen how birds the earliest teachers of man. That is not all. Our ancestors looked upon these senior children of Mother Earth their friends and helpers, too. Our ancient literature speaks of this warm attitude of man towards his fellow-creatures.

When the demon Ravana kidnapped Sita, and Rama resolved to do everything possible to rescue her, who were his most earnest, most dedicated and most faithful helpers? The Vanaras. Jambavan, the bear-king, too, was at his disposal with his battalion of bears.

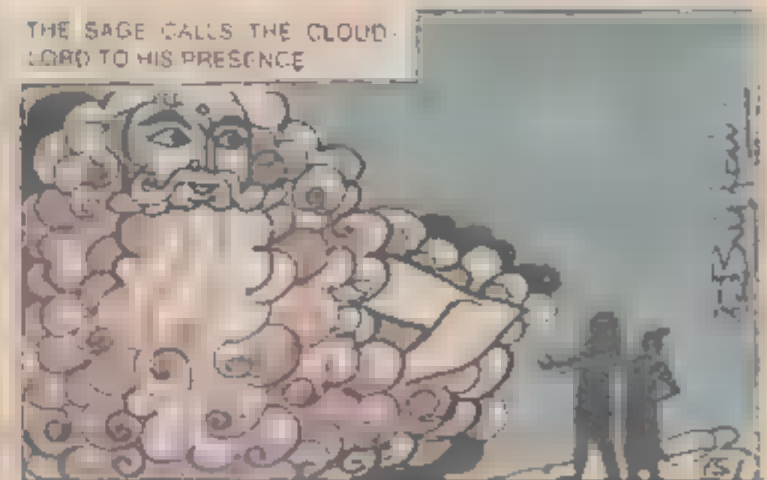
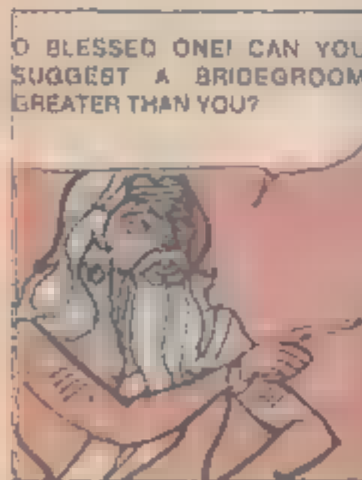
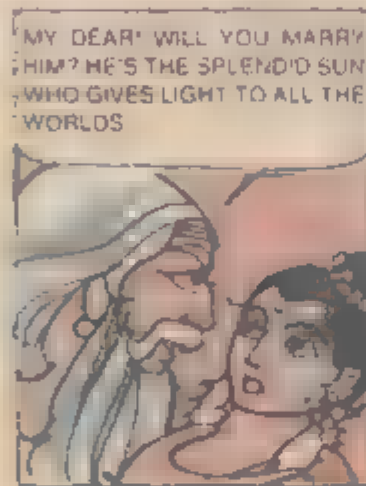
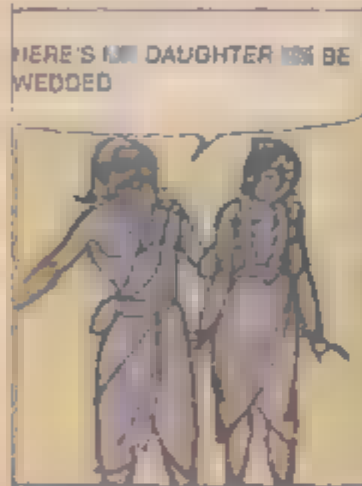
Even earlier, it was Jatayu, the noble king of birds, who lay dying because of the wounds inflicted on him by Ravana when the bird tried Sita from his clutches, was the one to inform Rama and Lakshmana about the plight of Sita.

These are instances to show the warmth with which seer-poets portrayed animals and birds. Our literature abounds in such characters. The elephant is portrayed as a beast of peace and understanding, the lion one of majesty and valour, so on and so forth. Innumerable fables and parables in the *Panchatantra*, the *Jatakas*, and the *Kathasaritsagara* feature animals and birds to teach us certain most valuable lessons.

In real life, too, we depended on animals like the elephants, horses, camels, and donkeys for our transport, before the mechanical vehicles were invented; they are still in use. In the battle-field, the well-trained elephant or horse was not only a carrier of a soldier, but also a partner. It knew how to move about in order to give its master or rider a chance to fight best.

And who does not know about the birds serving messengers and couriers?

The question we must ask ourselves today is, do we still bear towards them the consideration they deserve, if not the respect and gratefulness? Could we have progressed without the help of our domestic animals, like the cattle and the dogs?



Any property acquired by fraud will entirely
perish even while it appears to increase.

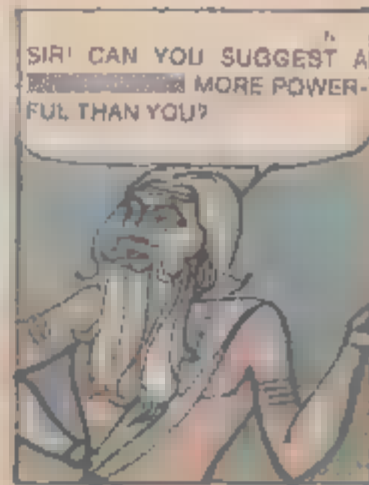
— Thirukkural



MY CHILD! WILL YOU ACCEPT
THE CLOUD-LORD AS YOUR
HUSBAND?



NO FATHER! HE'S TOO DARK!
I DON'T LIKE HIM!



SIR! CAN YOU SUGGEST A
MORE POWER-
FUL THAN YOU?



YES, SIR! THE WIND-GOD.



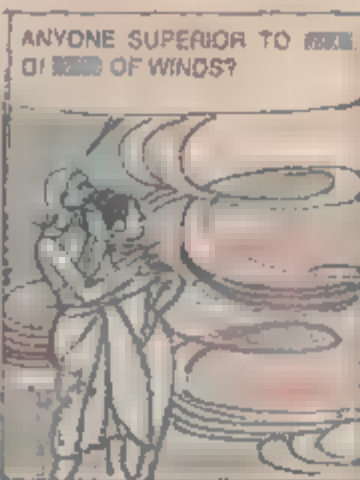
SO THE WIND IS SUMMONED



MY DAUGHTER! DO YOU LIKE
HIM?



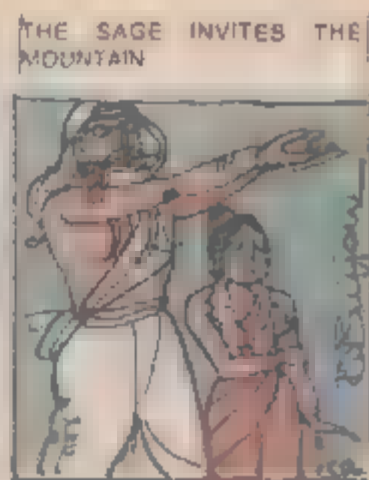
FATHER, I DON'T LIKE HIM.
HE'S FICKLE AND UNSTEADY



ANYONE SUPERIOR TO
OF WINDS?



YES, THE MOUNTAIN



THE SAGE INVITES THE
MOUNTAIN

There will be an end to life for one who climbs
to the end of a branch and still ventures to go
further.

AND THE MOUNTAIN



MY DARLING, DO YOU LIKE HIM?

NO FATHER! HE'S RUGGED AND STIFF!



O! MIGHTY MOUNTAIN, IS THERE SOMEONE MIGHTIER THAN YOU?



THE MOUSE IS MIGHTIER THAN I



A MOUSE IS ASKED, AND HE COMES THERE



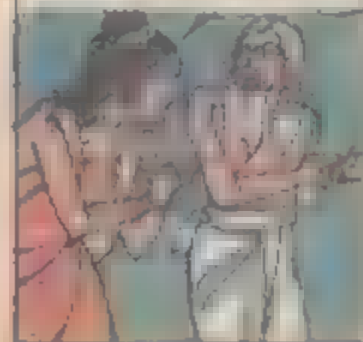
O FATHER! HE'S SO CHARMING AND HANDSOME

DO YOU LOVE HIM, MY CHILD?



PARAKSHA CONCLUDES THE STORY THUS

YES, FATHER! I'LL MARRY HIM. PRAY CHANGE ME INTO A MOUSE. WE SHALL LIVE HAPPILY.



SO THE MIGHTY MOUNTAIN, GORGEOUS SUN, POWERFUL WIND, AND THE GREAT GROUND GOD COULD NOT ATTRACT...



THE MOUSE-MAID WHO COULD NOT GO AGAINST NATURE

SO, EVEN IF YOU'LL BE REBORN AS AN OWL, YOU'LL CONTINUE TO LOVE THE GROWS!



Do any act after due consideration of five aspects—
money, means, time, place, execution.

NO ONE PAYS ANY HEED TO RAKTAKSHA'S ADVICE. THE OLD CROW IS TAKEN AS A GUEST TO THEIR FORTRESS.

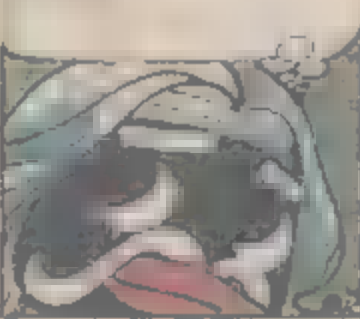


FROM TODAY, YOU'RE MY GUEST SIR!

THANK YOU, O KING! THANK YOU! VERY MUCH!



CLEVER RAKTAKSHA ALONE IS WISE AND DIPLOMATIC. I'M LUCKY, THE FOOLISH OWLS HAVEN'T FOLLOWED HIS ADVICE.



IN THE FORTRESS OF THE OWLS, FRIENDS TREAT HIM AS A ROYAL GUEST. HE'S OUR FRIEND, WELL-WISHED!



LET THE OLD CROW CHOOSE ANY OF OUR CHAMBERS FOR HIMSELF.

I MUST STAY NEAR THE GATE, NOT IN THE HEART OF THE FORTRESS.



NOW TO CARRY OUT MY PLAN!



I'M INDEED HONOURED BY YOUR KINDNESS, BUT I SHOULD NOT ABUSE YOUR HOSPITALITY. LET ME LIVE HERE, BESIDE THE GATE.



THE OLD CROW IS REGULARLY FED. HE GROWS STRONG AND STURDY.

NOW THESE OWLS TREAT THIS TREACHEROUS CROW LIKE A PRISONER.



AGAIN RAKTAKSHA

O KING! LET ME WARN YOU AGAIN. YOU'RE MISLED BY THESE FOOLISH COUNSELLORS.



THIS REMINDS ME OF AN ANECDOTE.



STOP YOUR WAGGING TONGUE!

Other than wealth, there is nothing that can change people of no importance into those of at least some importance.

Of bitter and sugar-coated words

Reader Jyotiranjana Biswal, of Durgapur, was found fault with by his friends for speaking out on a contentious issue. The matter was rather delicate and he held strong views about it. However, for a long time, he refused to disclose his feelings. But when he was goaded by some of his friends, he thought he would no longer remain a silent spectator. So, he spoke, though he wondered whether he was not hasty. In the evening, his close friends met him at his house. One of them said, "You wore your heart on your sleeve." He said that by way of caution, leaving Biswal to figure out what was in store for him. *To wear one's heart on one's sleeve* is when one makes public those feelings that are better kept private. Iago, in Shakespeare's *Othello*, adds: "for daws to peck at", meaning one is then open to criticism.

The query by Asima Sahoo, of Dhenkanal, about one being "mealy-mouthed" is relevant in this context, when one is unwilling to give offence and prefers to be not outspoken. If at all one speaks, he uses sugar-coated words, to be on the safe side and to ward off criticism!





THE FLOWER WITH A CURSE (II)

(King Mahendra Singh of Nagapura, who is impressed with the tribal youth, Thangal, does not want him to go alone into the sea to entice the monster with the 'Shatabdika' flowers. He arranges for his brother-in-law, Captain Veerendra Kumar, to go with him. The Captain reaches the capital, but the journey is delayed because the flowers are missing from both the apartments of Princess Mallika and the residence of Chieftain Kabui. The Captain has already made known his unhappiness about escorting a mere tribal youth, and everybody who matters is aware of his ambition even to grab the throne. Is he hatching another conspiracy? Will it succeed?)

Chieftain Kabui was unable to give an answer to Commander Arjun Singh's question: "So, Captain Veerendra Kumar had come to know of the flowers in your place from Thangal himself?" Probably the tribal chief thought the query did not need an answer. It was a fact that the two had met to talk about

their mission to encounter the monster at sea with the flowers brought from Maninagar."

Before Kabui could reply, the Commander asked the tribal Chief, "Do you think Veerendra Kumar is involved in this?"

Now, it was common knowledge that the ambitious Captain once had an eye on the post of

AN ENCOUNTER AT SEA



Commander, but was frustrated when it was denied to him. He was subsequently heard boasting to some soldiers loyal to him that they would, before long, find him ascending the throne. That clearly indicated a potential threat to the king.

"But why does he need flowers to carry out a conspiracy, even if he's trying to hatch one?" asked Kabui.

Arjun Singh felt that the Chieftain had a point there. "Anyway, Thangal cannot be going on his mission, either alone or with an escort, till the flowers

are found. I've sent my soldiers everywhere. Kabui, I would advise you to remain in the capital till we get some news."

The Chieftain went back to where Thangal was billeted. He told the tribal youth of his conversation with King Mahendra Singh and Commander Arjun Singh.

Towards noon the next day, a soldier brought two tribal girls to them. "Kabui, someone calling herself to be your daughter has come looking for you."

The Chieftain came out of the room. "Chitra! You here?" He was apparently surprised, but looked worried, too. "Has anything happened to Mai?"

"Mai is all right, Ba!" said Chitra, but she appeared quite excited.

"Then, what brought you here?" Kabui was impatient.

Chitra went closer to him and almost whispered, "We've found the flowers!"

"You mean the 'Shatabdika' bunches have been found?" asked Kabui, unbelievably.

It was only then that Chitra noticed Thangal had joined them at the porch. "As usual we had

gone to the beach this morning and saw his boat turned upside down," she said, now a little louder, "and inside were the bunches of flowers ■ if they had been hidden. Someone seems to have dragged the boat to the sea, twice, as though he had wanted to go but changed his mind later. And then upturned the boat, maybe to prevent the flowers from floating away. We thought he had made an attempt to go away with the flowers," she added, pointing at Thangal.

"No, Chitra, he was very much here," said Kabui. "But, where are the flowers?"

"We left them where we saw them," replied Chitra. "You were not happy when we took them from his boat last time, so we didn't even touch them. We went back to tell Mai about the flowers, and the two of us rushed here to tell you also. You know, you were upset when they were stolen from our place."

Thangal listened to all this conversation, though he did not understand much of what they said to each other. He guessed from the mention of "Shatabdika" by Kabui and the gestures made by Chitra and her friend

that it was all about the flowers. He was eager to know from the Chieftain what had happened to them. He saw Kabui putting out a smile.

"You both be here, Chitra," said Kabui, patting her on the back. "We must go and inform the Commander about the find. He has sent his soldiers everywhere to search for the flowers, and he'll be anxiously waiting for reports."

"What was your daughter saying about 'Shatabdika'?" asked Thangal, inquisitively, as soon as they started walking.

The Chieftain then apprised Thangal of all that Chitra told him. He was happy to know that the flowers had been found; but what surprised him most was that someone had made an attempt to put out to sea in *his* boat. But who would want to take the flowers, and for whom, or what purpose? The only person who would be eager to get the flowers was the monster. And he himself had set out from Maninagar for that very purpose. Now who else would want to go on that same mission? Captain Veerendra Kumar? But he was supposed to go *with him* and escort him, as



wished by King Mahendra Singh. If it was the Captain, what would be his real motive?

When Arjun Singh saw both of them together, he guessed there might have been some sudden developments. "What's it, Kabui?" He paused for a second.

"The flowers have been found, Commander!" said Kabui.

"That's good, Kabui, but why didn't the soldiers come to me? Did you meet them on the way?" enquired the Commander.

"No, Commander, not by the soldiers. They were found by my daughter and her friends," rep-

lied the Chieftain, who went on to tell him all that he heard from Chitra.

"The flowers should be guarded, Kabui, lest they're taken away again," remarked Arjun Singh, worriedly. "Let me send some soldiers to the beach to take care of the flowers and the boat."

King Mahendra Singh was happy when he was told that the flowers had been found. "Arjun Singh, I feel we shouldn't lose any time in sending the flowers to the monster -- if I may put it that way! What do you say, Kabui? When can you start, Thangal?"

"Your Majesty, Captain Veerendra Kumar is already here; the soldiers to go with him have been chosen; and the boats are ready, too," said the Commander.

"There need not be any further delay, Your Majesty," Kabui too agreed.

"On my part, Your Majesty, you're well aware how keen I am to complete the mission for which I left Maninagar," said Thangal very humbly. "I would have gone myself, but Your Majesty is kind enough to ensure my safety by giving me an escort.

I can start today itself, Your Majesty."

"We've all the confidence in you, young man!" said Mahendra Singh getting up from his seat. He placed his hands on Thangal's shoulders. "Our country needs many such brave young men, Thangal. May you succeed in your mission and come back safe. Arjun Singh, see to all the arrangements. I must tell Mallika about the flowers."

After the king had left, Arjun Singh, Kabui, and Thangal went back to the Commander's residence where he sent for Captain Veerendra Kumar. The moment he saw the Chieftain with the Commander, his face dropped, which was noticed by everybody.

"We've just come back after meeting the king," said Arjun Singh. "His Majesty wants you and Thangal to go on your mission today."

"Why today, Commander?" The Captain had a worried look on his face. He then turned his eyes on the Chieftain, and then Thangal. "But where are the flowers?"

"The flowers? Why do you ask?" queried the Commander.



"We've to take the flowers with us, haven't we?" replied Veerendra Kumar.

"Yes, the flowers. That's the purpose of your mission—to meet the monster at sea and entice him with the *flowers*," the Commander said, laying stress on the word. "You both shall reach the beach near the cliffs in the evening and put out to sea immediately. Both of you take one boat; it will carry the flowers. Two other boats with the soldiers will follow you. They have already left for the cliffs with the boats. You may go and get ready



soon."

"But the flowers ...?" the Captain blurted out, without completing the sentence.

The Commander was curt in his reply. "I told you, Captain, everything is ready and is just waiting for you!"

"Yes, Commander," said Veerendra Kumar. He saluted him and went away, his face now red.

"I'm sure he knows about the theft," commented the Commander. "There's no time for an enquiry, that's why I let him off. Anyway, Thangal, be careful

when he's with you in the boat. Beware of him and if he says anything, just listen to him. He may not harm you as he wouldn't want to face the monster alone."

"I shall be careful and do as you have advised me, sir," said Thangal, reassuringly.

It was decided that Kabui will accompany them to the beach and see them off. He and Thangal then took leave of Arjun Singh and returned to their apartments, where Chitra and her friend were eagerly awaiting them. While Thangal got busy, preparing himself for the voyage, Kabui told the girls about the youth's imminent departure. However, Kabui thought it prudent not to tell them about the monster.

When Veerendra Kumar joined them, they saw that he had a sullen face. He was glum as he walked with Kabui and Thangal towards the beach. The two girls walked behind them. They were also silent.

The soldiers waiting for them at the beach saluted the Captain and greeted Kabui and Thangal. They both responded by crossing their arms over the chest. The three boats had been kept ready

for sailing, the bunches of flowers neatly stacked in one boat. Thangal recognised it as the boat on which he had sailed from Maninagar.

He walked up to Chitra, opened his sash, and gave her the "Shatabdika" sapling he had kept with him safe. With the help of actions and signs, he asked her to plant it near her house and take care of it. There was a sad look on her face.

All the while, Chieftain Kabui was watching Veerendra Kumar. The moment he saw the flowers neatly stacked in the boat, he appeared quite excited and impatient, too. He looked at Thangal, wondering what was delaying him getting into the boat. Kabui took the cue and went up to Thangal. "I think you should start well before it gets dark. Remember all that I had told you, and take good care of yourself. We all look forward to your safe return." He crossed his arms over the chest to bid farewell. Thangal did likewise and moved towards his boat. The Captain had already taken position. The soldiers pushed the boat into the sea and then got



into their own boats.

The tide was already rising, so the two found it strenuous to row the boat and take it through the opening in the cliffs. One huge wave, on its return, dragged the three boats into the sea, and rowing was now not so difficult. It was not yet time for sunset and Thangal knew they could reach the deep sea well in time to await the monster. The boats with the soldiers were following them at a distance.

"How're you sure that this monster of yours won't return to Nagapura or your Maninagar

even after you draw him far away to some place where you can dump the flowers for his enjoyment?"

The question from Veerendra Kumar came so sudden that Thangal stopped paddling for some time so that he could collect his thoughts. More surprising than the question itself was the captain's tone. Was he annoyed that he had been given a job not to his liking?

"We've reasons to believe that he is being attracted to Maninagar by these flowers, and as it is also believed that they won't grow for another hundred years, we felt we could lead him far away with these flowers. We haven't left a single 'Shatabdika' in Maninagar," replied Thangal.

"If it is so, we can even make him do our bidding, by enticing him with the flowers, can't we?" asked Veerendra Kumar, with a sinister laughter.

"What do you *mean*, Captain?" said Thangal unbelievably. "How can you talk with a monster? Will he understand our language? And what is it that *you* want the monster do for you?" The next moment, Thangal remembered the conspiracy in

Nagapura centering round the Captain.

"Young man! You may *now* know, if you haven't heard it from any one as yet," said the Captain. As he spoke, he put out a hideous look. "I want to become the king and I'll make this monster destroy the palace and along with it the king, the queen, and the princess. All of them are hindrances in my path, and there is no better method to cross the hurdles than by befriending the monster!"

Thangal wondered whether he was now face to face with another monster! The first one was after simple, plain flowers. But this one seemed more ambitious, and wile.

"But why should you want King Mahendra Singh to be killed? He's a good ruler, loved by his people. The queen is *your* sister, and the princess *your* niece. Why should you wish to harm them, Captain?" They were not actually questions, but some loud thoughts.

"You won't know why I wish they are dead!" said Veerendra Kumar. He contorted his face and continued. "If they remain alive, they'll be impediments, and

my wish won't be fulfilled. In fact, I won't brook anything that crosses my path—including a mere tribal youth like you!"

"Me, Captain?" Thangal was bewildered. "But... but ... I brought the flowers from Maninagar, and I don't want them to be used against the king and the royal family. I protest!"

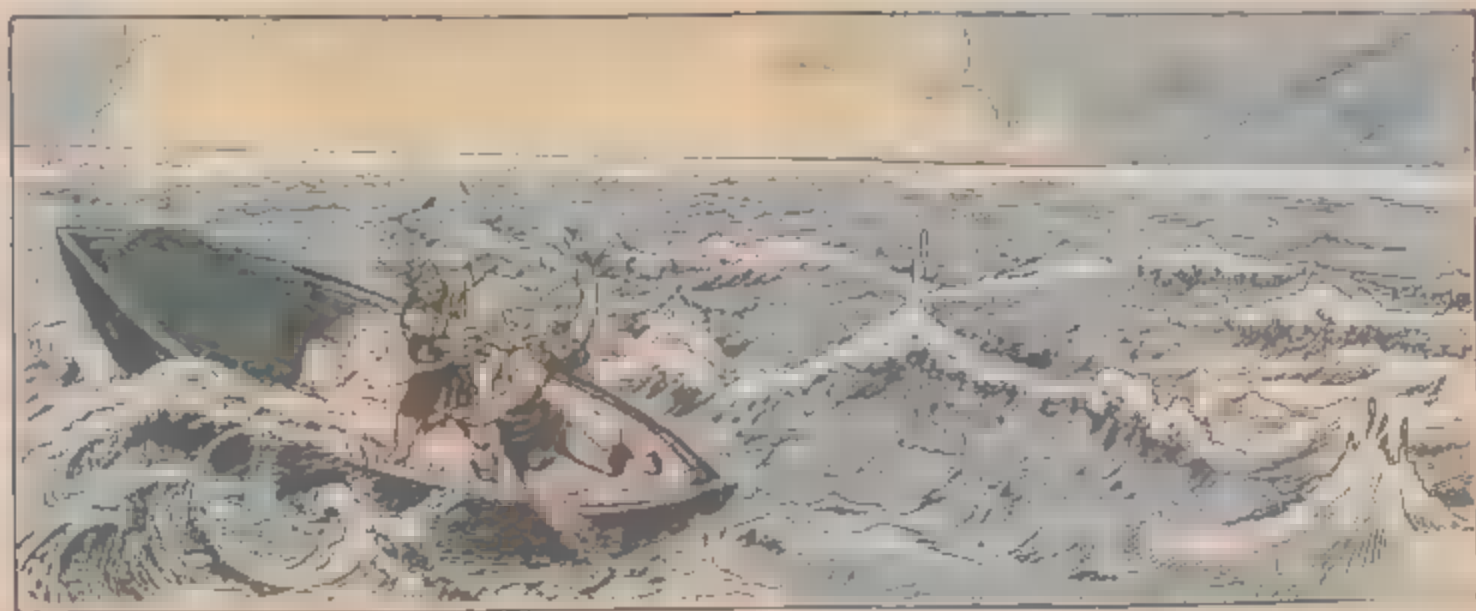
"I care two hoots!" the Captain shouted. "Young man! Did you say 'protest'? I'll show you how I *protest!*" Veerendra Kumar, who was then standing, gave a strong push to Thangal with his paddle. He lost his balance and fell into the sea. The Captain waited for a while to see whether Thangal would rise and try to reach the boat. There was no trace of him. So, he turned his boat and rowed fast towards the other boats. When he came alongside, the captain ordered

the soldiers to transfer the flowers into one of the boats and himself got into the same boat. By then, it was slowly getting dark.

Thangal bobbed in the sea for some time and could not see what was happening to his boat, the Captain, and the flowers. He began to swim, at the same time conserving his energy. Suddenly his hands touched something. It was the empty boat. He caught hold of it and managed to crawl into it. Fortunately for him, the paddles were inside.

Now, where should he go? he wondered. As the flowers had been taken away, there was no need to wait for the monster. He could only go back to Nagapura and inform everybody there as to what happened. He saw the cliffs at a distance, and less headed towards land.

To Conclude





A NON-THAFTED MONEYLENDER

Pannalal needed a thousand rupees very badly. He approached his friends for a loan. But none came forward to help him. He had no other go except to try his luck with his own uncle, Channalal, though he knew that the man was a miser.

"I shall give you a loan," said Channalal, "but what's the guarantee that you would repay me? You don't have a house; you don't have even a bit of land that you can call your own. How then can I make sure that you'll return the money? I suggest you go and meet Sunderlal of Shivpuri. I'm told he doesn't disappoint anybody, and tries to help whoever approaches him. No harm in trying, Panna."

Pannalal was disappointed. He thought his uncle had snubbed him and so felt insulted. However, he proceeded to Shiv-

puri. Sunderlal took a good look at him, and found out everything about him from Pannalal himself. "You shouldn't attempt to take a loan even though you find it the easiest method to solve your problem. You appear to be strong enough to take up some work and thus make an earning. So, I've a proposition: I shall give you a thousand rupees provided you agree to give me back two thousand rupees after one year. And suppose you're unable to pay that next year, then at the end of two years, you'll have to give me four thousand rupees. The amount will proportionately increase in that ratio if there is delay in repaying me. Are you agreeable?"

Pannalal did not appreciate this condition, but what else to do? Nobody else was willing to oblige him. So, he did not want to

reject Sunderlal's offer. The wisest thing would be to take the money from him as quick as possible. The question of repayment could be thought of later. So, he signed the promote and took the money from Sunderlal.

Pannalal invested the money in trade and earned good profit in the first year itself. After all expenditure, he made a clean profit of five thousand rupees. He decided to give back two thousand to Sunderlal. Before he could go to Shivpuri, one of the traders of the locality met him. "I heard you've some five thousand rupees to spare. Why don't you become a partner in my business? You can surely make not less than thirty thousand rupees in just one year."

Pannalal believed him. Would anybody forego a chance to make that much money if he could afford it? If he were to return the loan to Sunderlal, he might not get another opportunity to earn so much. He could then repay Sunderlal in the third year, though it might be more than three times the loan amount. Even then he would be left with twenty-six thousand rupees. So,



he agreed to join that man's partnership.

The business thrived, and Pannalal earned a huge income. But he did not repay Sunderlal in the third year or the fourth year. Even the fifth year passed without Pannalal calling on Sunderlal. Pannalal was now a wealthy person, with assets worth lakhs. He opened his own jewellery shop. In proportion to the increase in wealth, Pannalal also became more and more arrogant. He had not forgotten the loan he had taken from Sunderlal. But how could he now pay him thirty-

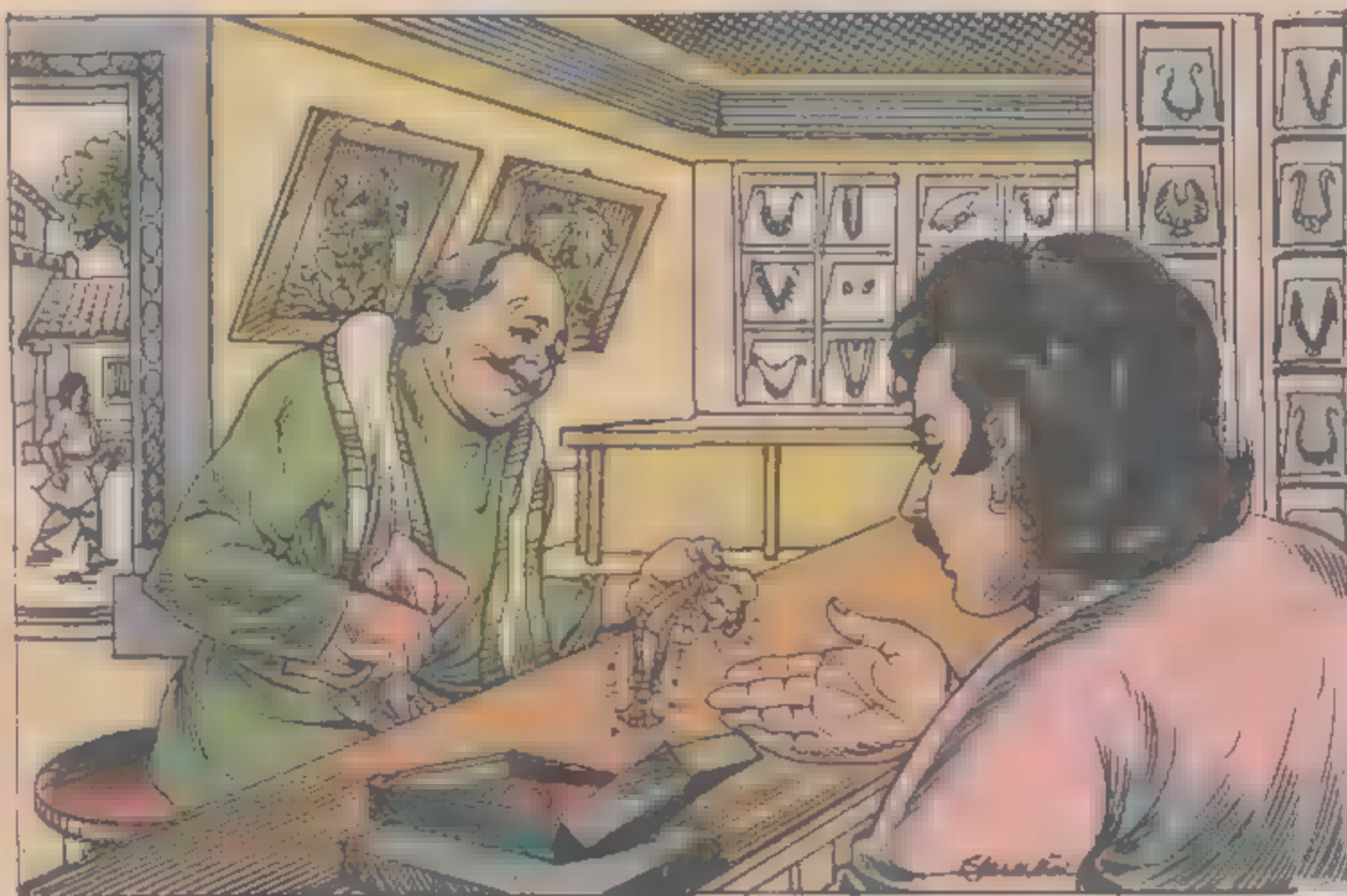
two thousand rupees in the place of a thousand rupees loan that he took five years ago? No. Pannalal decided, he would not abide by any such terms and conditions.

One day, Sunderlal went to Pannalal's shop to buy ornaments for his daughter, whose wedding was to take place shortly. He selected jewellery worth four thousand rupees. He gave Pannalal only three thousand rupees. "I've brought only that much. I shall give you one thousand later."

Pannalal was not very happy, but agreed when he remembered that he had to give thirty-two

thousand rupees to Sunderlal. After he left the shop, Pannalal wondered: 'Did he come here to ask for repayment of the loan? But he got back from me only a thousand rupees. Let me see how he's going to claim the rest of the money!'

A few days later, he heard that Sunderlal had died suddenly. 'I don't have to repay my loan now!' Pannalal thought mischievously. 'After all I had taken from him only a thousand rupees, and he himself owes me a thousand rupees for the jewellery he bought from me. So, there's nothing more that I need pay

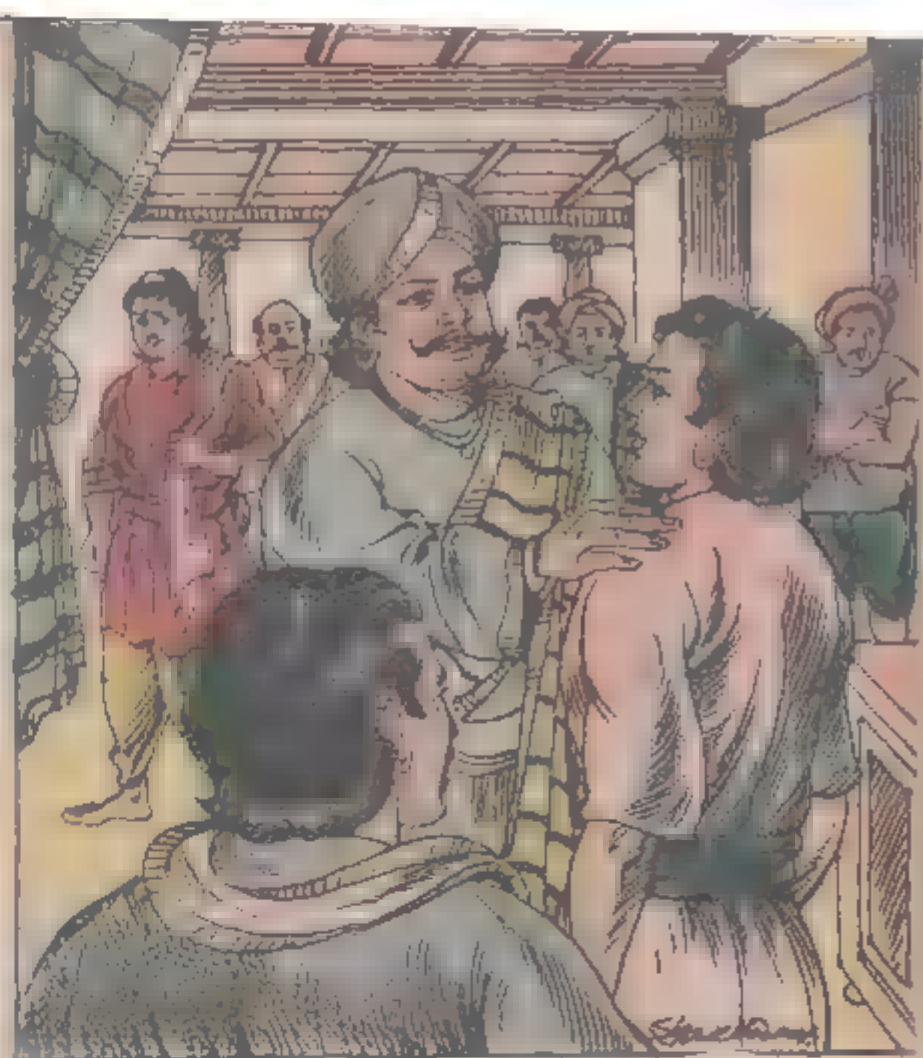


towards the loan!"

For the eleventh day ceremony, Sunderlal's son invited all his father's friends and business associates. Pannalal was present at the ceremony. During their conversation, the young man told Pannalal, "My father had helped a lot of people; even given loans to some of them. He had kept a diary with all the details. He had also left a will. But strangely, both the diary and the will are missing. I'm still searching for them."

The village chief of Shivpuri overheard the conversation. "Your father had once told me that he used to keep all important papers and documents in an iron trunk. I know where they have been kept. But today is not an auspicious day. So, I shall show them to you tomorrow."

Pannalal was now a worried man. Suppose the diary and the documents were found. Then, he would have to pay Sunderlal's family a huge amount. He must somehow prevent the discovery of the papers. Luckily for him, there were four other debtors who also thought on the same lines. They took a joint decision.



That night, they sent a thief to Sunderlal's house. He woke up the family and, pulling out a dagger, threatened them with dire consequences until they opened the iron trunk for him. He searched for the diary and the documents and left the place without harming anybody. Later, he handed the papers to Pannalal and the four others.

Before they set fire to the papers, they were curious to know what Sunderlal had written in his diary. It read: "I am helping several people with money; but I do not treat them as loans. My



only objective is to help them tide over their difficulties. But I do not tell them that the monies are *not* to be paid back. If I make any such announcement, then even those who really have no need for such help will come to me. I am also giving my debtors advice as to how they should utilise the money. Some of them have taken my advice and thrived. And whenever they returned the money, I used to spend it on charities. I have never utilised those amounts for my own needs. I have also never reminded

any of them about the loans. I hope my son will continue this practice."

Pannalal and friends were stupefied when they read this. The diary merely mentioned how much money had been given to different persons. Against Pannalal's name, there was mention of only one thousand rupees. They realised that they all had gone wrong about Sunderlal. They promptly went to his son and returned the amount they had taken from his father.

Principal : You've done well in the interview. Now, what's the name of your parents?

Four-year-old: Ma and Pa.



Chandamama Supplement-64

BIRDS OF INDIA

The Rare White Tiger

When anyone mentions the White Tiger of Rewa, one would like to add in Shakespearean words, "... and thereby hangs a tale!" This true story took place some forty years ago—May 26, 1951, to be exact. The Maharaja of Rewa arranged a hunt for his royal guests in the forests near Deva. An unsuspecting tigress, followed by four cubs, came in their view. One cub alone escaped their bullets. It was a white cub which was caught the next day and taken to the summer palace at Govindgarh. It escaped in the night, but was caught again the next day. The cub was named "Mohan". He was nine months old. He was introduced to "Begum"—a normal tigress. Ten cubs were born, but not one was white. Mohan then paired with Radha, also a normal tigress. She gave birth to four cubs, all of them white. The date October 30, 1958. Mohan thus became the progenitor of all the white tigers in India and elsewhere.

Ten zoos in India had, in January 1990, 16 male and 23 female animals, while eight zoos outside India had 47 males and 37 females, besides 10 cubs—making a grand total of 133. That was four years ago.

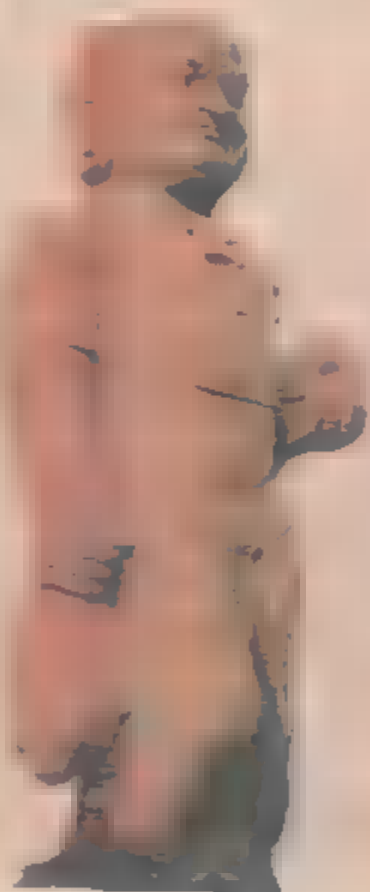
In the normal tiger, the body colour varies between dark orange and golden yellow, with black stripes. The cheeks, throat, and abdomen are white. The eyes are dark yellow-brown. The coat of the white tiger is white or off-white, with light brown or ash-grey stripes. The eyes are ice-blue or pale blue. The white tigers are larger and heavier than the normal ones. However, there are no differences in habits or behaviour.

It may interest you to know that a miniature painting in the second volume of the 3-volume *Akbar Nama* (A.D. 1561) by Abul Fazal, one of the nine 'gems' in Akbar's court, depicts a white tiger! That is the first ever mention of this rare animal.





RAMKINKER



Nandalal Bose, the celebrated art-master at Kala Bhavan, Santiniketan (founded by Rabindranath Tagore), was presented with a new student in 1925. He was a boy in his teens. His name was Ramkinker.

"Can you show me any drawing of yours?" asked the master.



The boy reluctantly took out a soiled scrap of paper kept pressed inside an equally soiled exercise book.

The master looked at it. He smiled and nodded. It took him no time to understand that he had got a worthy student for his institution.

The talent in Ramkinker had been earlier detected by another famous man of Bengal, Ramanand Chatterjee, editor of the "Modern Review". It was he who had sent Ramkinker to Santiniketan. In a very short time, Ramkinker proved that the expectations he had aroused in both his well-wishers were not to go in vain. He charmed his teachers and his

friends by his imaginativeness. He endeared himself to everybody by his humility and aroused still greater hopes in his well-wishers.

Ramkinker was open to both the Eastern and Western traditions of art. Soon, he developed a distinct style of his own. What is more, he was a pioneer in introducing the abstract style in Indian art.

What is abstract style in art or what is abstract art? It is a drawing or painting which does not show an object as it really looks, but in such a manner that its essential quality will become clear. A great thinker may be shown with a disproportionately large head, for example.

Ramkinker's art was full of vigour; one felt as if they were in a motion. His themes were many—nature, human characters, supernatural characters (in front of the Reserve Bank of India building in Delhi can be seen two sculptures by him, a Yaksha and a Yakshini—see picture on facing page) and animals and birds.

Ramkinker lived a very austere and simple life. Although he was loved and revered by his students, art-lovers, and critics, pride seemed to have never touched him.

In 1976, the Visva Bharati conferred on him the title **Deshikottama**. Tributes to his genius came from several other quarters. He died in 1980, at the age of 70.



DO YOU KNOW?

1. Who was the Viceroy in India when Britain declared that it would grant Independence?
2. Which country is called "the sugar bowl of the world"?
3. Which king was a contemporary of Kalidasa?
4. Of which country is the currency called LIRA?
5. Who wrote "*Buddha Charita*"?
6. Who invented the safety pin?
7. Which Indian State has the largest ~~area~~ covered with forests?
8. Which country will you visit to see the Valley of Roses?
9. A National Park in India is in the midst of a large lake. Which is the park?
10. Which is the largest desert in the world?
11. When was rationing first resorted to in India?
12. What is the name of the epic written by Jaishankar Prasad?
13. Where will you experience the coldest winter in the world?
14. In which year did Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi return from South Africa to take part in India's freedom movement?
15. Who founded the Republic of Indonesia?
16. What is the meaning of Mohenjo-Daro?
17. Which state in India grows cloves and pepper in large quantities?
18. When did Wimbledon Championships start?
19. Who is India's chess champion?
20. Who wrote India's national song, *Bande Mataram*?

Answers:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Lord Wavell | 11. In 1943 during the great Bengal famine |
| 2. Cuba | 12. <i>Kamayani</i> |
| 3. Chandragupta Vikramaditya | 13. North-eastern Siberia: minus 50 degree centigrade |
| 4. Italy | 14. In 1915 |
| 5. Asvaghosha | 15. Sukarno |
| 6. Walter Hunt | 16. The mound of the dead |
| 7. Arunachal Pradesh | 17. Kerala |
| 8. Bulgaria | 18. In 1887 |
| 9. The Madhupur National Park in Manipur | 19. Viswanathan Anand. He is ranked No. 3 in the world, after Karpov and Kasparov. |
| 10. Sahara, in north Africa (8,400,000 sq. km.) | 20. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, in his novel <i>Anandamath</i> |

Tales from Many Lands (France)

WHAT IS A TRIFLE?



Once upon a time, there was a poor peasant boy called Jean. He was an orphan and he lived all alone in his little farm. So poor was he that there were days when he had nothing to eat, or even a penny in his pocket. So, one spring morning, he set out to seek his fortune in the town that lay beyond a dense forest.

As he walked along, a rich merchant rode past him. A nail got loose from his horse's shoe and skipped to a side of the road. Jean picked it up and called out

to the rider at the top of his voice, "O traveller, stop! Your horse has lost a nail from its shoe."

"I've no time for such a trifle as a piece of iron!" replied the rider and he galloped away.

The young lad, thinking that it might be of some use to him, put the nail in his pocket and continued on his way. He had but gone only a furlong when he came across a man struggling to fix the wheel which had come off his carriage. "Only if I could get a little bit of iron!" he mused,



looking at Jean. "I've to cover a long distance before nightfall."

Jean went closer to the coach, bent down and closely examined it. He found that nothing was broken, only the cotter pin of the wheel was missing from the axle. With the nail he had in his pocket they put the wheel back in its place. The grateful traveller not only rewarded Jean with a couple of gold coins but offered him a lift, too. "Sometimes iron is more precious than gold," he remarked, as they drove happily towards the town.

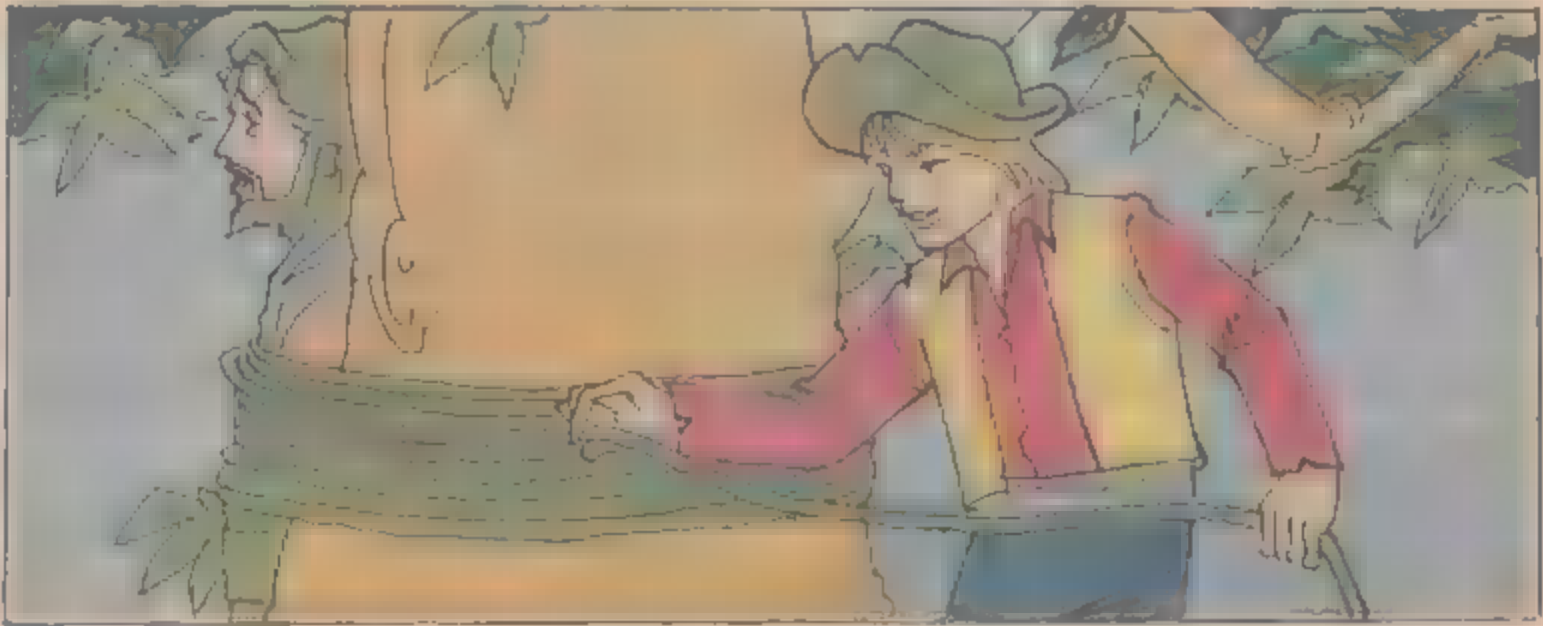
Meanwhile, the merchant got

into trouble. His horse stumbled over stones and finally lost its shoe on account of the missing nail. He was forced to dismount and lead the animal by the bridle. He was passing through the forest when some bandits surrounded him, robbed him of his horse and his wares and left him tied to the trunk of a tree. The helpless man could do nothing but resign himself to his fate. Who would come to his rescue in this wilderness?

In the town, Jean bought provisions with the gold coins he had earned for his kind deed. He ate and took rest. Then with his bag hung over his shoulder, he started back homewards. As he neared the woods, he met an old man who had lost his way. He was about to faint because of thirst and hunger. The young peasant gave him food and drink and showed him the way to the town.

"You've a gentle heart, my boy," said the man, handing out to him a pouch of silver pieces.

Jean thanked him and resumed his journey. It was already dusk and birds were returning to their nests. Deep in



the woods, he suddenly heard a cry for help. The voice led him to the rich merchant bound to the large tree-trunk. "What has happened to you, Sir?" he asked, untying the ropes.

"Oh, what misfortune has befallen me!" said the trader with tearful eyes and recounted all that had passed. "Now, I've not only lost my horse and my precious wares but also the handsome profits that should have been mine. A tiny piece of iron is what had reduced me to this sorry state. It was so foolish of me to have turned my nose at it!" he bemoaned.

Jean took him home and gave him food and shelter for the night. "You're very brave, kind and prudent! Will you come with me and manage my estate and be a partner in my business?" proposed the merchant, after he had regained his composure.

The peasant boy was only too happy to accept the trader's grateful offer.

'A trifle brought fortune to one and misfortune to another! Indeed, is there anything to be dismissed as a trifle?' wondered Jean as he went to sleep.

—Retold by Anup Kishore Das

If you have money in your pocket, you are wise and you are handsome, and you sing well, too.

Where might is master, justice is servant.

SPORTS SNIPPETS



Richest of all

A prize money of 169,000,000 Yen (Japanese currency—equivalent to nearly 5,00,00,000 in Indian rupees) was won by a Japanese horse for its owner when it ran the 13th Japan Cup at the Tokyo Race Course on November 28. The top favourite was "Kota-shaan" of the U.S.A.,

which had an incredible record of six wins in nine starts during the season. But 4-year-old "Legacy World" unleashed a burst of power in the final stretch, to win this richest race in the world. The U.S. horse sprinted a head in front of another Japanese horse, "Winning Ticket", to take the second place.

Sports camel

A camel called Bint Al-Shahin, meaning Shahin's daughter, won a 5 km race in Muscat, in Oman, in what has been described as a "humpingly good" 8 minutes 16 seconds, which works out to over 40 km per hour. A U.A.E. admirer in the stands, watching the race, was impressed by the camel's performance. He approached the owner, Ahmed Al-Darai,



and said, "Name your price!" The "sports camel" was sold for a record price of more than 134,000 U.S. dollars. In 1992, ■ Omani racing camel had been sold for 154,000 dollars. Incidentally, Dromedary (one-humped camel) racing is ■ national sport in the United Arab Emirates.



Riches | athlete

Hoopster Michael Jordan earned in 1993 some 36,000,000 U.S. dollars that made him the richest athlete, for the second year running. Boxer Riddick Bowe came second at 25,000,000 dollars. He ■ not "in the picture" in 1992. Automobile racer Ayrton Senna was placed third at 18,500,000 dollars. Among tennis players, Jim Courier (12,600,000 dollars) and Steffi Graf (9,800,000 dollars) led all others. It may be remembered that Jordan retired from professional basketball in October.

Record catches

Jonty Rhodes of South Africa created a world record while playing in Bombay against West Indies. It was the one-day international for the Hero Cup, on November 14. Rhodes took five catches—a world record for a non-wicketkeeper in one-day internationals. He eliminated the record standing in the name of six players from as many countries, who had taken four catches. They are John Bracewell of New Zealand (1980), Salim Malik, Pakistan (1984), Sunil Gavaskar, India (1985), Richie Richardson, West Indies (1991), Kepler Wessels, South Africa (1992), and Mark Taylor, Australia (1992).



Deaf, dumb, blind—yet active



She was deaf, dumb, and blind, too. This terrible discovery was made by her sad parents when Helen Keller was a baby of nineteen months. In 1887, when she was seven, she learnt the first two words—“water” and “teacher”—from Annie Sullivan, herself partially blind, but had agreed to teach Helen through the “finger alphabet”.

She was dipping the girl's finger in water. Suddenly, Helen poured water all over her hand, and began tapping on that hand the symbol for “water”. She then pointed to Annie, who tapped the word “teacher”.

This was the beginning of Helen's “education”. From then on, she made tremendous progress. She mastered reading Braille in English, Latin,

Greek, French, and German. She was able to converse through her finger language. When she was ten, Helen spoke in a strange half-human voice, “I'm not dumb now!”

Her mother, Katherine Keller, who would not at first believe that misfortune had overtaken her beautiful baby and had hoped that some miracle would save her child, wrote to the Perkins Institute for the Blind, in Boston to send one of its graduates to stay with Helen and give her instructions. Annie Sullivan, then 21, was sent to the Keller home in Alabama, where she arrived on March 3, 1887, which Helen were later to describe as “My soul's birthday”. However, in the beginning the teacher found her ward “savage”—she screamed, wept, kicked, and bit! The patient teacher, a month later, taught Helen the first word: water.

When she was 20, Helen joined the Radcliffe College. Four years later, she graduated with top honours. She had all her textbooks put into Braille; she used a special typewriter for her exams; and she could, by resting her fingertips on the speaker's throat, “hear” the human voices. It was during her college days that she wrote her first book—an autobiography titled *Optimism*.

The optimist in Helen Keller enabled her to conquer her disabilities and lead a near normal life. She wrote several other books which sold faster than they could be printed!

In October 1936, Annie Sullivan died. Before her death, a friend told her, “Without you, Helen would be nothing.” To which Annie responded, “Then, I have failed.” Neither she nor her student failed. Helen was able to look after herself and remained active till her death a few weeks before her 88th birthday.

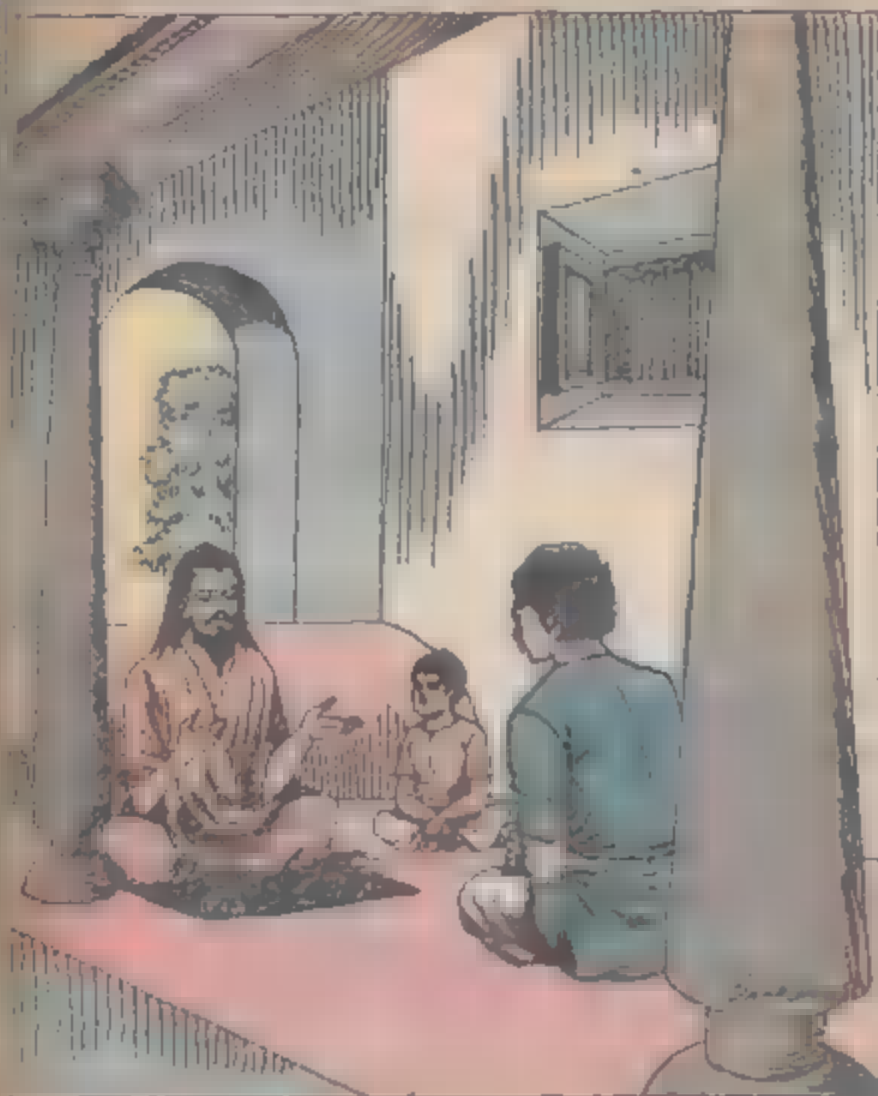


New Tales of King Vikram and
the Vampire

A Monkey For a Son

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time; gusts of wind shook the trees. Between thunderclaps and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning revealed fearsome faces.

But King Vikramaditya did not swerve a bit. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought down the corpse. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground, with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse spoke: "O King! You seem to be making untiring efforts and without respite as if you wish to achieve something. I pity you. Instead of enjoying comfortable sleep on a cozy bed, you're still coming after me. Are you under some obligation to anyone? There are times when the decision taken by



kings and judges may not be correct or may go awry. You must be feeling tired. You can relax while you listen to this story." The vampire then narrated the story of two farmers, Ramappa and Krishnappa.

Krishnappa helped his father on the farm, but the boy had a craze for music. He used to sing well. His ambition was to learn music and become a great musician. He would dream of holding recitals and enjoying the admiration of several fans. But that remained a mere wish, for, Ramappa and his wife wanted

their son to be an able farmer and relieve his father of responsibilities as he grew up. At Ramappa's insistence, Krishnappa had to go to the fields and get the feel of working under the sun and in slush and dirt. The old man tried to impress upon him, saying he would not be able to earn anything from music, whereas the farm would fetch him his livelihood.

Young Krishnappa tried his best, but he failed to show any interest in farming. Several times he told his father that he would go and learn music, instead. Both father and son were adamant. When Ramappa feared that his son would not abide by his wish and advice, he locked up the boy in a room, and decided to use force on him. He denied food to Krishnappa. The first day he was unmoved; the second day, he became stubborn; the third day, he felt the pangs of hunger. On the fourth day, he fell unconscious. When he woke up, he told his father that he would renounce his ambition and go back to the farm. Ramappa freed him and allowed food to be given to him. Krishnappa soon appeared to

have forgotten everything about music.

Both father and ■ worked hard on the farm, which gave them good yield. For two years, they reaped profit from their fields. The next year, rain was scanty and all crops withered in the hot, dry sun. In fact, they did not have enough even for their own food. The village suffered from drought and the villagers left the place one after the other. Ramappa had to sell his house to repay his debts. He then left his village with his wife and son. After walking ■ long distance, they felt tired and rested in the

shade of a big tree.

They were surprised when a little monkey climbed down from the tree and went and sat on the lap of Ramappa. He fondled the monkey for some time. When they got up to go, he carried the monkey with him. After wandering for some days, they reached the city where they found it difficult to get ■ place to stay. So, they had to spend their days beneath ■ tree. Krishnappa went about helping people by carrying their goods on his head. Whatever little he earned, he brought home and gave it to his mother.

Meanwhile, Ramappa taught





some tricks to the monkey. At first it was not obedient. Ramappa, therefore, put it to starvation. The animal then became obedient. He took it round the place giving shows. He earned much more than what Krishnappa was able to bring in. "Suppose I sing and the monkey were to dance? You'll then do something more," said Krishnappa. Ramappa was happy when he heard that he had chances of earning more. He did not have any desire other than making money and more money.

One day, Krishnappa was

singing and the monkey was dancing. A famous musician of the place, Gangaram, came that way. He stopped and listened to Krishnappa. He liked the way the boy was singing. "You've a good voice!" Gangaram complimented him. "You seem to have a lot of interest in music. Why should you spoil your talent by singing in market-places? You come with me—right now—I shall teach you music. You can earn a name and fame in no time. Do you agree?"

Krishnappa felt, here was a golden opportunity to pursue his desire. He should not let it go. He took a firm decision then and there. His father was horrified and scolded Krishnappa and did not spare even Gangaram. Unmindful of how Ramappa had reacted, Krishnappa accompanied Gangaram.

Now, Ramappa was alone, left with just the little monkey. He continued his shows and tried to save as much money as was possible, so that he could put up a little house for himself and his wife.

One day, he had a caller. The caller had been sent by a wealthy

person who was keen to watch the monkey show. He wanted Ramappa to go with him immediately, promising that he would be rewarded with ■ thousand coins. Ramappa did not waste any time and started for the residence of the messenger's master. He took the monkey with him.

The zamindar was surrounded by servants. He asked Ramappa to start his show. It went on for a long time and the zamindar was mightily pleased. He gave Ramappa one thousand coins. "Do you recognise me?" he asked Ramappa. "You take that money

and lead a quiet, peaceful life."

Ramappa recognised the voice, as that of his son. "Krishnappa! How did you become so rich?" The father ■■■■ keen to know how his son made so much money, rather than be happy over his status.

"My *guru* taught me music for one whole year," said Krishnappa. "I caught the attention of the king, and my fans organised two receptions for me, when they showered me with riches. I've earned enough wealth that would take care of half-a-dozen generations after me."

"Now that ■ have ■ wealthy





son, why should I go about holding monkey shows like this?" said Ramappa with a sigh of great relief.

"Let me go and give your mother this good news!"

"I'm not bothered how the two of you will spend the rest of your lives!" remarked Krishnappa in a stern voice. "Neither you nor my mother should come anywhere near here, even for once. If I wish to see my mother, I shall go over to your place. What I gave you is what I owe you for bringing me up. I don't owe you anything more. Whenever I feel like doing

so, I shall send you money. You don't have to ask me. You may go now." He then got up and went inside.

Ramappa went home and told his wife how he had met Krishnappa and what he said. His mother was very angry. "How dare he say that his own parents cannot enter his house? Let's go and complain to the judge."

The judge sent for Krishnappa and listened to his explanation. "Krishnappa now considers his *guru* and his wife ■ his father and mother, and is looking after them in his house. For him, they ■■ now his parents. However, he is wrong in giving his own parents a thousand coins and telling them that he has no more obligations to them. Someone should take his place as their son. Krishnappa should, therefore, procure a little monkey and give it to them, to be brought up as their son in his place," said the judge.

The vampire ended the narration there and turned to King Vikramaditya. "O King! Isn't it the duty of the son to take care of his parents? Krishnappa had failed in his duty, so his parents

had to go to the judge for redressal, but he decided that Krishnappa need only give them a little monkey to fill his place. Was it a fair judgement? If you know the answers, yet prefer not to reply me, beware, your head will be blown to pieces!"

The king thought for a while and said: "Man has intelligence which is what distinguishes him from animals. Man uses this intelligence in several ways—like giving proper education to his children. But Ramappa failed in this duty. He insisted on his son doing farm work, whereas Krishnappa very much wanted to learn music. His father's only aim was to make money and more money, and he used his son to achieve this. The greedy father almost spoilt the future of his son. Just as he put his monkey to starvation to teach tricks, he denied

food to his son to force him to work on the farm. The monkey did not serve its own parents. But it was instrumental in Ramappa earning a living. Likewise, Krishnappa learnt music from Gangaram and took him and his wife to his house and looked after them as his parents. It was as good as his taking care of his own parents. So, the judge was right in asking him to give his parents a monkey to be brought up like their son. If Ramappa were to teach it tricks, then the monkey would help him earn a living. So, what Krishnappa did and what the judge decided were both correct."

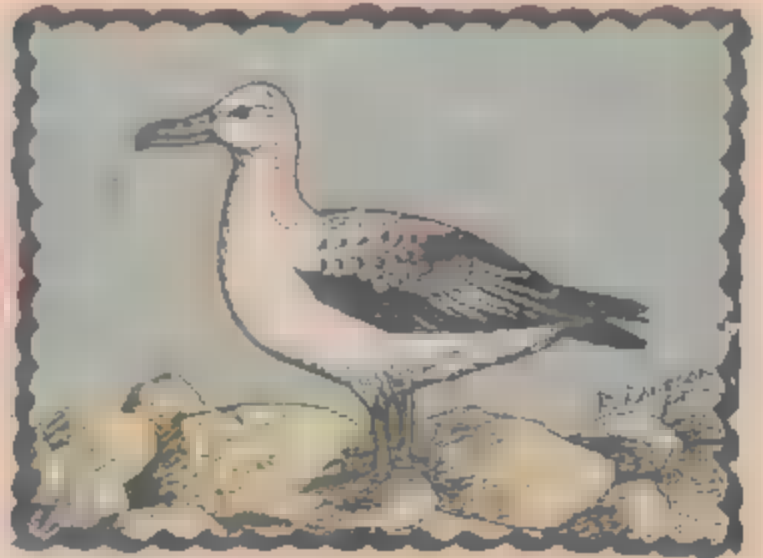
The vampire knew that Vikramaditya had outsmarted him once again. He flew back to the ancient tree, carrying the corpse with him. The king drew his sword and went after the vampire.



WORLD OF NATURE

Glide, and take 'forty winks'

Anybody who has watched birds in flight would have seen them flapping their wings. There is one bird which can fly without beating its wings—albatross. This bird can glide in mid-air, not for one day or two days, but up to six days! Will it remain awake all these days? No, it can go to sleep while it glides!

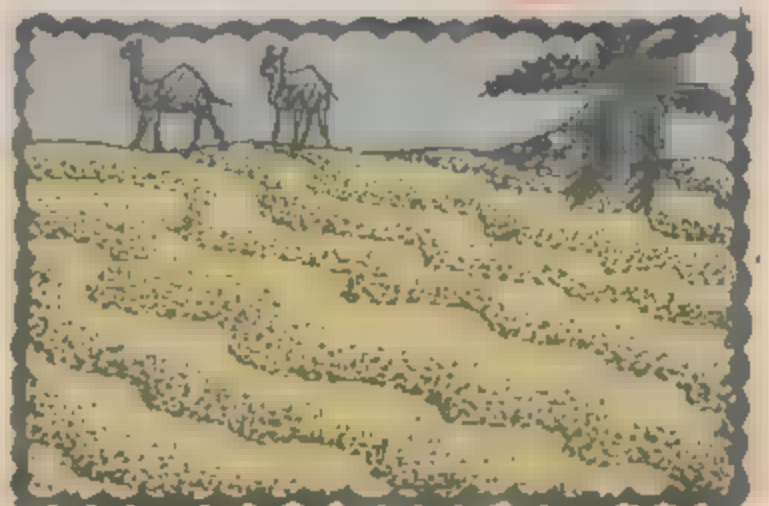


How flowers go to sleep

Have you watched flowers—some flowers, at least—going to sleep? These flowers are very delicate and sensitive to changes in temperature and light. At night, when it becomes cooler and dark, they close up their petals and appear as if they have gone to sleep! Definite reasons for this phenomenon are not known. Perhaps it is because of lack of light; or there is a drop in temperature. Some flowers close their petals even during the day when it becomes very hot—to protect themselves from the heat.

Shifting dunes

You walk through a desert one day trying to familiarise yourself with the shape of the dunes and their contours. Suppose you take a walk along the same 'route' the next day; you will wonder—where are the dunes that you saw the previous day? They would have vanished, to give place—rather, shape—to new dunes. This happens because, the sand is constantly blown by the wind, changing the shape of the dunes, before you open your eyes after closing them for five or ten minutes. You may easily lose your way, as you cannot remember any landmarks, like you do when you walk on regular roads and streets.





(41)

(The people of Ayodhya are threatened by Lavanasura. Rama sends Satrugna to kill the Rakshasa. He comes back victorious. Sage Agastya complains about Satakandha. Rama asks Hanuman to deal with him. But he suggests that he would carry Rama and his army on his shoulders. Sita goes with them. It is an arrow sent by her that kills the demon. The diamond necklace Rama gives her is gifted to Hanuman. He takes Rama's permission to go to Gandhamadana mountain to meet his mother. During his absence....)

One day, Rama was holding court and discussing the state of the kingdom with his ministers, when the arrival of Viswamitra was announced. Rama paid his obeisance to the sage and took him to a seat. As soon as he sat down, the sage said, "Rama, the King of Kasi, Yayati, is arrogant. He has

insulted me. You must kill him. You may take this as my command!"

Rama was aware that Yayati was a righteous king and he would not be unfair or unjust to anyone. But, then, the orders had come from none else than his guru. He could not possibly refuse to obey his revered

A FIGHT WITH RAMA



teacher. At the same time, he would lose an ally in Yayati, a king who did everything for the welfare of his people. How could he go and kill such a person? Rama was in a dilemma.

Viswamitra was angry with Yayati because the king had failed to give him due respect. It so happened that his subjects had gone to the king to complain about a herd of elephants that was destroying the crops and terrifying both cattle and the villagers. As king it was his duty to ensure the welfare of his subjects, so Yayati decided to

hunt down the elephants. He was driving them away in the forest, when Viswamitra came that way. Yayati did not notice the presence of the sage, who took it as an insult. Hence his command to Rama to take revenge on Yayati.

The king came to know that Rama was getting ready for a war with him. He was shocked. Queen Yasodhara and their children, Prince Chandrangad and Princess Chandramukhi, were all devotees of Rama; they could not believe their ears when they heard of the threat of a war from Rama himself.

Yayati wondered what crime he had committed to provoke Rama's anger. "Rama does not forsake anyone if he were to seek refuge in him," said Yayati. "I shall go and fall at his feet and ask him to pardon me!" He was getting ready for his journey to Ayodhya, with his family and entourage, when sage Narada reached there. Yayati told him what had happened.

"Are you out of your senses, O King?" remarked Narada. "Don't you know that Rama will keep a promise once he gives it? If you go to him now, he'll surely kill

you, as he is angry with you. So, it would be better if you approach Anjana Devi and appeal to her. Her son, Hanuman, is with her now. So, go to them straight away."

Yayati thought that the sage had given him the right advice. So, he started for the *ashram* of Anjana Devi, where he found her in deep meditation. "Devi!" he wailed before her. "I have sought refuge here, please save me!"

Anjana Devi was disturbed by the king's wailing. She suddenly woke up from her meditation and stood up. When she saw Yayati in front of her, she comforted him,

"Son, don't be afraid. I assure you, on the strength and power of my son, that no harm will come to you!"

Hanuman reached there in search of his mother. Yayati bowed before him. "I'm Yayati, the King of Kasi. I'm a devotee of Rama. You alone will be able to save me from the danger I'm facing now. I entirely depend on you."

"Don't worry on any count!" Hanuman assured the king. "My mother has already given her promise: I'm her son, and it's my duty to carry out her promise. Don't have any doubt. I shall





save you from whatever danger you're facing."

"Now that Hanuman has also given his assurance," said Anjana Devi, "please tell us what kind of danger is threatening you."

"How can I describe it!" said Yayati with a sigh. "Rama, whom I worship, wants to kill me! I've no idea what crime I've committed, to have earned his displeasure and wrath. I haven't done anything deliberate."

"Is it true that Rama himself wants to kill you?" said Anjana Devi, unbelievably. "I wonder whether I've been too hasty in

giving you a promise. How can my son fight Rama on your behalf? What shall I do now?" She wrung her hands in despair.

Hanuman saw his mother facing a dilemma. "Mother! You should not go back on your word. It's our duty to protect whoever seeks our refuge. I shall not allow any harm come to King Yayati. We must face whoever happens to be his enemy."

Soon word spread that Hanuman would fight on behalf of Yayati. The news reached Ayodhya as well, and both Rama and Sita heard it. She fell into a long silence. Yayati's wife, Yasodhara, along with her two children, came to meet Sita. "Devi, please save my husband. Please ensure that I am not widowed."

"Yasodhara! Please don't worry," Sita consoled her. "It's certain that Hanuman will protect your husband. He's right now with Hanuman, and so he is safe. Till he comes back, you may stay in Ayodhya with your children." She then made arrangements for their stay in the palace.

In the meantime, Rama went in search of Yayati, taking his bow and arrows with him. He

was accompanied by his three brothers, ministers, and an army. Hanuman accosted them. He fell at the feet of Rama. "My lord! Please be kind to Yayati. Don't kill him. He is innocent. Let him go free."

But Rama was not willing to forgive Yayati. "I must kill him. That's a promise I gave to my *guru*, and I must carry out that promise." He then pushed Hanuman with his foot to make way for himself.

Hanuman got up and stood before Rama with folded hands. "Ah! I've now been blessed by the touch of your feet. Just as Ahalya Devi got redemption when you kicked the stone she ~~was~~ cursed into. I'm blessed by new strength and vigour!"

"Stop flattering me, Hanuman!" Rama pulled him up. "You'd better turn over Yayati to me! My *guru* has commanded me to kill him."

"I can understand your devotion and loyalty to your *guru*," said Hanuman. "But your *guru's* orders are unfair. Yayati is innocent. And my mother has given him a promise that she'll protect him. I'm duty bound to



keep that promise. So, if you wish to kill Yayati, then you must first kill me! As long as I am left with a breath of life, I shall not allow Yayati to be killed." He then enlarged his figure and stood before Rama like a mountain.

"Are you terrifying me with your prowess?" asked Rama.

"No, my lord!" replied Hanuman calmly. "It's all your blessing!"

Rama sent a shower of arrows at Hanuman. He warded them off with his tail. Rama sent more arrows at him. Hanuman evaded



all of them. Hanuman did not have to offer any fight, and the encounter lasted a long time. Just then Viswamitra came there. Before Rama could see him, Hanuman had noticed the sage. "My lord! Your *guru* has arrived."

"I'm not bothered!" Rama countered. "Beware! I'm going to use the Rama-ban arrow."

"Rama! Hold on!" shouted Viswamitra. "Stop your fight! It was all due to my false pride. Yayati is innocent. You let him go free!"

"That's impossible, O *guru*!"

said Rama. "I've already strung the arrow. Now, I must use it. I must carry out your orders. Please don't put obstacles!" He saw Yayati taking cover behind Hanuman. "Hanuman! This arrow will pierce your heart! Before that, you would be well advised to hand over Yayati."

"The name of Rama is always on my lips!" said Hanuman, coolly. "So, I'm not afraid of anything or anyone. It's my duty to protect whoever comes to me seeking refuge. So, I've decided to protect and save Yayati by even sacrificing my life. If you're keen on sending the arrow, I shall not prevent you from doing so." He then bared his chest, ready to receive the arrow. The arrow pierced his chest and went deep inside and disappeared. But nothing happened to Hanuman.

Everybody there was able to see a brilliant image of Rama on Hanuman's chest. They were all wonderstruck. Rama let go his bow from his hand. "Hanuman! You've won the fight You've overcome ~~me~~ with your devotion."

"My lord! This fight had no winner, nor any loser," said Hanuman. "Your arrow had





pierced my chest, but it has not remained there. It has gone back to you. That's your greatness. I don't take any credit for that."

"In protecting those who seek refuge," remarked Viswamitra, "you and Rama are equal. You both will not disappoint them. You, Hanuman, have proved your ability and shown your strength. It's not an easy thing to fight Rama. You've proved that

you're not mere Hanuman, but Veer Hanuman! Your name and fame will remain till the world exists." The sage then blessed Hanuman and expressed his repentance that he was the cause of a misunderstanding between Rama and Hanuman.

Hanuman took leave of Rama and all others and returned to Gandhamadana for his *tapas*.

-To continue

"Is that the fire station?"

"Yes. What's the address?"

"Well, I've just relaid my garden and you know plants are costly these days..."

"You probably want the flower shop. This is the fire station."

"Look here, that's what I want to tell you. My neighbour's house is on fire. But, tell your firemen that they should not run all over my garden."





Who will marry a midget?

Meeran of Mirjapur was a midget. He was not uncouth to look at, but he was also not handsome. However, he had a knack of handling elephants, especially those in *masth*. The moment they saw Meeran approaching them, they would turn docile and stop all their mischief. The king of the land often made use of his service.

Once the king was witness to the way Meeran controlled an elephant which was running amuck. "I feel proud that you belong to a village in my kingdom," the king complimented him. "I feel you deserve a place in my court. So, I hereby appoint you the chief officer in charge of the elephants in the royal stable."

Meeran accepted the offer with gratitude. When he became a palace official, he also began enjoying a lot of facilities and

privileges. He had a team of assistants; he earned the pleasure of the king; and he received great respect from the other palace officials. Despite all this, he was left with one sorrow—that he was not handsome.

The king doubted whether Meeran was not moody because he was unable to get a wife. "Meeran, you must marry soon," the king prompted him every now and then.

To which he would reply, "Your Majesty, thanks to you I'm holding a good position in the royal court. That has also fetched me a status in society. But I doubt whether I'll be able to marry at all!"

"Why do you say that?" the king queried. "Just wait. I shall see that you get married soon."

Meeran bowed low and left the king's presence without a word.



The king, from then on, began worrying about Meeran's marriage. He secretly found that no girl, who happened to meet Meeran, wished to marry him. If at all any girl agreed even to consider a proposal, she would make it out to be a great sacrifice on her part. The king was in a dilemma. Suddenly he had a brainwave. He made an announcement. Anybody in the kingdom willing to give his daughter's hand in marriage to Meeran would receive the gift of a house and a piece of land wherever he liked, besides a fat

amount of cash.

Just as he had expected, many parents fell for the royal offer, though they were not quite certain how their daughters would react. Their response was not encouraging, and naturally both the king and Meeran were disappointed. Meeran ruled out all possibilities of a marriage.

However, a few days later, three young women sought an audience with the king. They told him that they were willing to marry Meeran. The king called them aside one after the other, and asked them what really prompted them to make that offer. "What made you say you'll marry Meeran?" he asked the first girl. "You can be frank with me and I shall keep it a secret."

"Your Majesty, I can't stand my stepmother's torment and torture any more. I want to escape from my home."

"I understand your problem; I shall find a solution for that," said the king to comfort her. "I shall find another bridegroom for you. What do you say?"

"I shall abide by whatever you say, Your Majesty," said the girl.

The king then asked another

girl. She replied, "Your Majesty, we're five daughters to our parents. I'm the eldest. After my marriage, the money I get can be utilised for marrying off my four sisters." The king assured her that he would find for her a wealthy bridegroom.

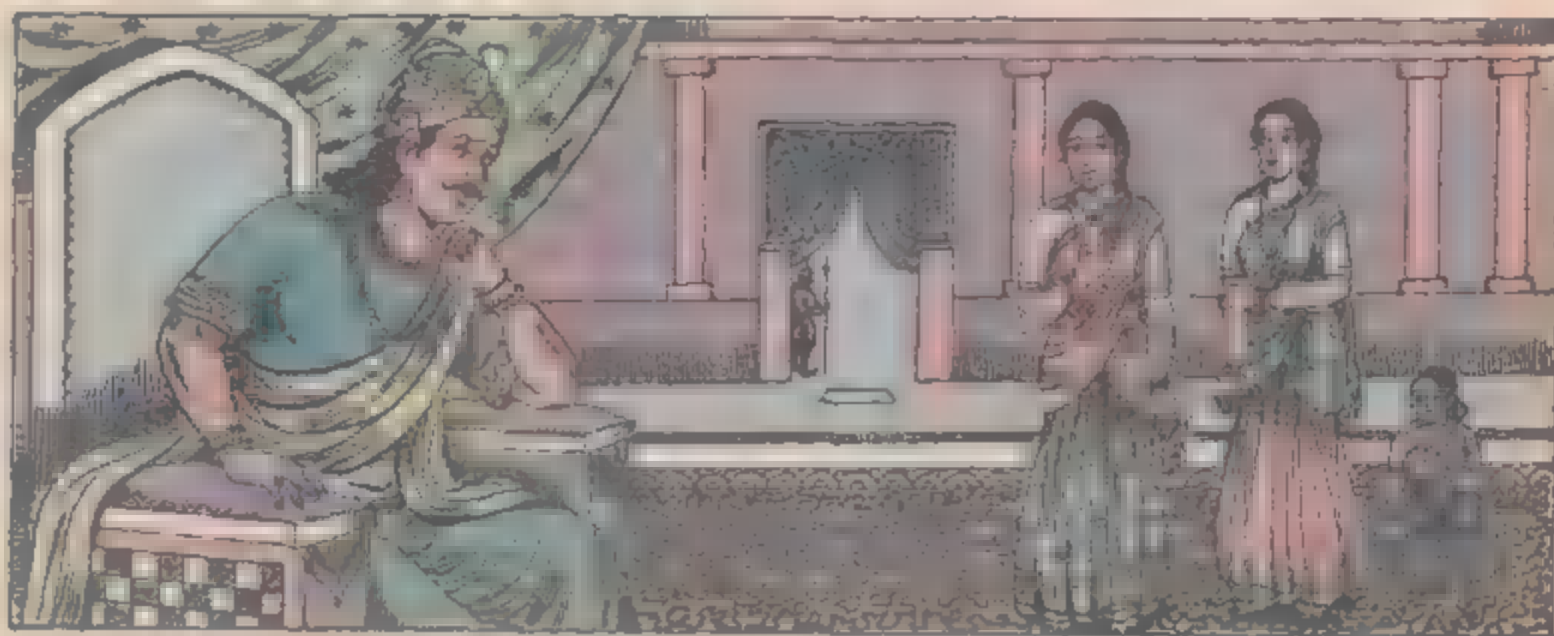
The third girl was short in stature. The king repeated the same question. "Why should you marry a midget? I shall find someone more handsome for you. Do you agree?"

She did not take any time to reply. "Your Majesty, you may be able to find for me a handsome man. But I wish to marry only Meeran. I only want to know whether he will consent to my marrying him."

The king sent for Meeran. "Here's someone short. And she loves you very much. She only waits for your consent. She will abide by your wishes and advice. I think she is a suitable bride for you. If you accept her, I want to celebrate your wedding soon. In case you don't like this girl, you may choose one of the other two."

"Your Majesty, I think this short one is most suitable for me," said Meeran, who thought if he had a beautiful or charming wife, she might despise him, being a midget. But someone short like him would certainly remain with him, carry out by his wishes, and obey him.

Midget Meeran thus made a wise choice.





LET US KNOW

Why ■ we advised to keep ■ light on when we watch the TV?

—M. Savarinathan, Berhampore

Looking at the TV in ■ dark room can result in an unpleasant glare. The intense light from the TV screen against ■ dark background can harm the retina, which is ■ very delicate tissue. It is like looking at the headlights of a car which have not been dipped. A soft light behind the TV is stated to be the ideal viewing condition.

How does a ship stay afloat—especially a loaded ship?

—G. Muralidharan, Calicut

The bottom portion of the ship is ■ hollow. The density there is less than that of water. Also, the total weight of the ship—whether loaded or not—is less than the water it displaces. The pressure mounted against the hollow bottom thus keeps the ship afloat.

Which is the heaviest of all metals?

—Gitanjali Parameshwar, Chandigarh

One foot by 1 foot by 1 foot (cubic foot) of iridium weighs a little over 1,400 lb—approximately two-thirds of a ton. One cubic foot of lithium, on the other hand, will weigh just 33 lb. They are the heaviest and lightest of all metals.

Does an apple a day really keep the doctor away?

—K. Marimuthu, Cuddalore

This old rhyme is a polite way to say that the juice of fresh apple will prevent constipation! Dentists however feel that biting on a crisp apple will remove the food particles caught between the teeth!

PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



S.G. SESHAGIRI



S.G. SESHAGIRI

Can you formulate a caption in a few words, to suit these pictures related to each other? If yes, you may write it on a post card and mail it to Photo Caption Contest, Chandamama to reach us by 20th of the current month. A reward of Rs. 100/- will go to the best entry which will be published in the issue after the next.

The Prize for December '93 goes to:—

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The winning entry: "Weary", "Merry"

PICKS FROM THE WISE

The only completely consistent people are the dead.

—Aldous Huxley

The world is full of willing people, some willing to work, the rest willing to ■■■ them (work).

—Robert Frost

Education can train, but not create intelligence.

—Edward M. Sait



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I remember
the day we
moved into our
new home. The boys
and girls on the block looked
like they were having
'hazaar' fun. But no, they didn't
look too interested in me.

How do you walk up to a new gang and
make them your pals? Think...Think. So
I just chuck a Try-Me in my mouth...walk
my best tough-guy-walk and offer them a
handful of Try-Me - "Go ahead,
Try Me!" Yeah. I made
five new best
pals that day.



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